



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AWAKENING OF CHINA

ADDRESS BY DR. WU TING-FANG,
Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of China to the United
States.

China, as is well known, is an ancient and conservative nation. She has existed for many thousands of years. She has seen the rise and fall of many ancient empires and republics. She saw Egypt ascend to the zenith of her power, and later she witnessed Rome extending her dominions and becoming the greatest power of the earth. She was a spectator when those nations and others, one by one, either fell or disappeared. All this time China stood intact, and she still remains a nation, practically without dismemberment.

It will be interesting to inquire why such an old nation has existed undivided while her contemporaries, one by one, have crumbled to pieces. Many causes have been given from time to time for this, but, in my opinion, the most important factor was the fact that she had shut herself up for many centuries and did not interfere with the affairs of other nations. Her people applied themselves wholly to the internal affairs of the nation. They did not bother about the affairs of foreign countries, but devoted themselves to literature, philosophy, ethics and agriculture. The people were dependent upon the resources of the country and were contented. They were home loving and patriotic, and disliked to leave their home. It was considered a dangerous thing to travel abroad, hence the people of China, up to a recent period, were most reluctant to leave their country.

It may be asked, What led the people to be contented with their native land and to dislike to go abroad? It was due to the universal love of the Chinese for their homestead. The place where their ancestors were born and had lived and died, where their parents were born, and where they themselves had been brought up, they dearly loved. The soil of their land was fertile and rich, and they could produce all they wanted, so there was no necessity for them to leave their fatherland. Thus the people had every inducement to remain in their own country. Their system of ethics taught them to be loyal to the emperor, filial to their parents, affec-

tionate to their brothers and sisters and faithful to their friends. With these teachings they were brought up, and, as there were practically no strangers in their land they did not know any other system of morals superior to their own. In course of time they became patriotic, honest and hard-working people. If their nation had not been disturbed by outside influences they would have remained to this day in the same condition. They were, however, not allowed to do so. The door of their country was opened by force of circumstances, and aliens and foreigners from different parts of the world had to be admitted.

The importance of this step was not at first realized, and for several decades the Government pursued its traditional policy without any change. It was thought that what had been good for the country for several thousands of years was surely good and would last for all time; but after numerous sad experiences the officials and others began to find out that though their ancient systems of government and civilization were in many respects equal, if not superior, to those of the West, yet in view of the altered conditions they were obliged to change their policy and learn something from the people of the West. Especially within the last few years the whole nation, high and low, has been awakened and aroused. Many important changes and reforms have been made in different directions, and what was deemed efficient and excellent has been found to be inadequate to meet the needs of the present.

Take, for instance, our old system of literary examinations for official appointments, which had existed for many centuries. It has recently been entirely remodeled, new regulations have been drawn up and are now in force. The candidates, many of whom have received foreign education, are now examined on modern subjects. I feel sure that in course of time the officials of China, recruited from such men, will be entirely different from those of a few years ago; and will compare favorably with the statesmen of other countries in ability and in knowledge not only of their own country, but of foreign affairs, also.

The army in China has within the last few years been reorganized. The men have been instructed and drilled under competent tutors. The national curse of opium smoking is being handled in a most energetic way. The conscience of the public has been aroused on this subject, and the people, high and low, are determined to get rid of this pernicious habit. There are many other

salutary reforms, too numerous for me to mention here, but I feel confident that in a few years China will no longer be dubbed the "sick man of the Far East," but will become a modern nation like her great neighbor, Japan.

It may be noted in passing that if China should become a strong power in the world it would never be a source of trouble to other nations, or be a "yellow peril," as some people seem to fear. Those who think otherwise are greatly mistaken. They do not understand our people. The Chinese are by nature and education a peace-loving people. The essence of the Confucian system is that right, and not might, is king; not the strong and the powerful, but the just and the virtuous ruler or people must prevail. They have all been taught to reverence righteousness and peace, and to denounce injustice and force.

Their past and present conduct at home and abroad will confirm what I say. What has been done within the past few years to put our army on a proper footing, and the intention of our Government to take steps for reorganizing our navy, should not in the least create suspicion in other nations. The aim of our Government is solely for defensive purposes and to preserve peace in our territory. This is testified to by many facts. In any movement having for its object the preservation of peace China has gladly joined; and in many cases where international questions arose our Government willingly offered to submit them to arbitration by disinterested parties or by a tribunal; though without success.

We are now in the twentieth century, and people of different nations take more interest in the affairs of each other. It looks like a family of nations. China, having been forced to open her doors to international trade and commerce, aliens, irrespective of their nationalities, are freely admitted to China to reside and trade. She was given to understand that her people could go abroad to trade as freely as the foreigners could come to China. We have students now studying in this country and in Europe, and it is a source of gratification to me to hear that they are afforded all facilities and are treated with courtesy and kindness. Our merchants and tradesmen have not come to this country, nor gone to Europe, in such large numbers as have the people of other nations; but I hope the time is not far distant when this will change. It is good for our people to go abroad, either to study or to trade, so that we can understand better your institutions and the

systems of your trade. In the same way it is open to you to come to our country and study our wants and requirements for the purpose of mutual commerce. Our people—students and merchants—in foreign countries should be treated in the same manner as are other foreigners, and I feel sure that your people, who are endowed with a sense of justice, will willingly accord us just treatment.

It is to be admitted that in the field of human activity the Occident surpasses the Orient. The manner in which the Western nations have unlocked the secrets of nature and harnessed her forces must excite the admiration of the East. But, while our people have a great deal to learn from the Western nations, the people of the West should not disdain to gain a little from the East. An old nation like China, which has stood for thousands of years, must possess some good quality to account for her stability. The keystone to our arch of morality has been the virtue of filial piety, and it has not been inaptly expressed by some writers that it is due to our faithful observance of the fifth commandment of the Christian religion that our days have been long in the land which Heaven has given to us. Another moral character of our people is their probity and honesty. If our moral character and habits and institutions were studied by the people of the West, just as much as we study theirs, much benefit would accrue to both sides.

Since the opening of China her trade with foreign nations has increased by leaps and bounds from year to year. This is not to be wondered at, because with such a large population and with such immense natural resources, foreign trade and commerce must increase. To those people who study and cater to the needs of our people naturally comes the larger share of trade. With the opening of the Panama Canal in a few years, the exports from this country will undoubtedly increase. With your possession of the Hawaiian Islands and the Philippines, which are practically neighbors to China, the trade between the two countries should be expanded.

As I am now on the eve of my departure from this country, I avail myself of this opportunity to express my grateful thanks for the courtesies and uniform kindnesses shown to me by the officials and people of America. I appreciate the honor and the privilege of coming here the second time as the representative of my government, and it is with sincere regret that I say good-bye to the many

friends I have in this country. There is, however, one consolation. I leave the United States in the most cordial relations with my own country. I do not take credit to myself. It is mainly due to the just policy of the successive administrations at Washington toward China, and it is also the result of many tokens of kindness shown China by your officials and people. We are a grateful people and we appreciate favors.

It is true that there is one blot which somewhat mars our otherwise most cordial relations; I refer to the subject of Chinese exclusion. This question, I regret to say, has not been properly handled, and hence it is not properly understood. We do not want favors or special privileges. All we want is to be justly treated in this matter—in fact, if not in the same manner as Europeans, at least as are the Japanese and other Asiatics. All fair-minded men will admit that this is reasonable and just. However, I am inclined to believe that this question will be satisfactorily settled as soon as the people of this country understand us better. So, I say again, and say with confidence, that the relations between this great country and mine will always continue to be as cordial and friendly as they have been in the past.